

REMARKS

Claims 1-20 are pending in the above-identified application. Support for new claims 11-20 is found in the original claims, as well as at pages 5-6 and 8-9 of the specification.

Issues Under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) and 103(a)

Claims 1, 4 and 9 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being unpatentable over Takahiro '811 (JP 2000-225811).

Claims 2 and 3 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Takahiro '811 in view of Takahashi '405 (EP 1 074 405 A1).

Claims 7 and 8 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Takahiro '811 and Takahashi '405, and further in view of JP '627 (JP 11-245627).

The above-noted rejections are traversed for the following reasons.

Distinctions Between Present Invention and Takahiro '811

Takahiro '811 discloses a tire with a tread pattern having main grooves extending linearly in the circumferential direction, and including rib rows wherein rib edges are chamfered on the

outside portions thereof as shown in Figure 1. Takahiro '811 discloses in paragraphs [0001] - [0002] that the described tire has a negative camber and is used for a high performance passenger car. Because the negative camber increases grounding pressure partially at the outer side corner of the tire (directed outward of the vehicle) of the circumferential rib control stability is reduced and uneven abrasion occurs. In order to prevent the uneven grounding pressure caused by the negative camber, Takahiro '811 discloses that a chamfer is provided on the outer side corner of the circumferential rib as noted in paragraphs [0003] - [0004].

Takahiro '811 fails to disclose "blocks" as employed in the ATV radial tire of the present invention. Note that only circumferential grooves exist in the tire tread pattern of the tire of Takahiro '811, with no axially oriented grooves, such that there are no "blocks" but only "ribs". Consequently, Takahiro '811 differs significantly from the tire of the present invention which includes a plurality of blocks in the tread pattern. Thus, significant patentable distinctions exist between the present invention and Takahiro '811.

Distinctions Between Present Invention and the Takahashi '405 and
JP '627 Documents

Takahashi '405 discloses a tire having a tread with a plurality of blocks, wherein at least a portion of a block edge is chamfered from the side of a block center to a groove wall surface of each of the blocks as described in paragraph [0017] and as shown in Figures 1, 6 and 7. Note that all of the block edges (e.g. all four block edges of a square-shaped block) have a portion of the block edge chamfered. This is because an object of Takahashi '405 is to provide uniform grounding pressure of the block surface. Takahashi '405 also discloses that the height of a notch (H_0-H_1) is 0-25% of the height of the block as noted at paragraph [0055] and in claim 6. Takahashi '405 does not require that a notch angle theta be limited, but does disclose four linear notch surfaces in Table 1 at page 9, Example 1 wherein theta is about 7 degrees, and Conventional Example wherein theta is about 14 degrees.

Takahashi '405 fails to disclose the tire of the present invention having chamfered blocks with a notch only present on an outer side edge of the block outward of the vehicle as in the present invention. Therefore, significant patentable distinctions exist between the present invention and Takahashi '405.

JP '627 discloses a tire tread having central blocks, wherein a "land ratio" of the tire is set in the range of 0-5 as mentioned in the English language basic abstract. JP '627 is directed to a motorcycle tire wherein a ground contacting area 2A in an upright condition has a land ratio T/S of 0.35-0.5.

JP '627 fails to disclose the tire of the present invention having chamfered blocks with a notch only present on an outer side edge of the block outward of the vehicle as in the present invention. JP '627 fails to disclose a land ratio of an inner side of the tread with respect to the vehicle from a tire equator being greater than that of the outer side of the tread with respect to the vehicle as in an embodiment of the present invention. Consequently, significant patentable distinctions exist between the present invention and JP '627.

Inconsistent Designs Prevent Asserted Combination of Documents

It is submitted that the rib-only, negative camber tread design of Takahiro '811 is completely inconsistent with the block-containing, positive camber tread features required by both Takahashi '405 and JP '627. Consequently, these documents cannot

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be combined as asserted in the Office Action such that these bases for the above-noted rejections should be withdrawn.

Conclusion

It is submitted for the reasons stated above that the present claims define patentable subject matter such that this application should now be placed condition for allowance.

If any questions arise regarding the above matters, please contact Applicant's representative, Andrew D. Meikle (Reg. No. 32,868), in the Washington Metropolitan Area at the phone number listed below.

Pursuant to the provisions of 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.17 and 1.136(a), the Applicants hereby petition for an extension of one (1) month to September 17, 2004, in which to file a reply to the Office Action. The required fee of \$110.00 is enclosed herewith.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees

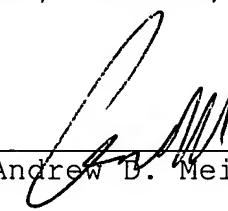
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required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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